

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1-6. Canceled

1           7.       (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2 comprising a flask having a structure defining a first opening; a first filter member disposed in  
3 the first opening; a second filter member disposed in the first opening juxtaposedly to the first  
4 filter member, a second opening, and ~~The device of Claim 6 additionally comprising~~ a third filter  
5 member disposed in said second opening.

6           8.       (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
7 comprising a flask having a structure defining a first opening; a first filter member disposed in  
8 the first opening; a second filter member disposed in the first opening juxtaposedly to the first  
9 filter member, and ~~The device of Claim 1 additionally comprising~~ a temperature-conductive  
10 member passing through a side of the flask.

1           9.       (Original) A freeze-drying assembly comprising a freeze-drying  
2 apparatus; and a device disposed in said apparatus for holding substances during freeze-drying,  
3 said device comprising a flask having a structure defining an opening, a first filter member  
4 disposed in the opening, and a second filter member disposed in the opening juxtaposedly to the  
5 first filter member.

1           10.      (Original) A method for processing a substance under sterile conditions  
2 comprising disposing a substance in a flask; positioning the flask in a drying apparatus; and  
3 passing a drying medium through a first filter member and through a second filter member  
4 juxtaposed to the first filter member for drying the substance.

1                   11.     (Original) The method of Claim 10 additionally comprising re-hydrating  
2     the dried substance.

1                   12.     (Original) The method of Claim 10 additionally comprising moving the  
2     second filter member against the first filter member.

1                   13.     (Original) The method of Claim 10 additionally comprising contacting the  
2     substance with a temperature-conductive member for monitoring the temperature of the  
3     substance.

1                   14.     (Original) The method of Claim 13 additionally comprising coupling a  
2     thermocouple to the temperature-conductive member.

1                   15.     (Original) The method of Claim 12 wherein said moving of the second  
2     filter member comprises flexing the second filter.

1                   16.     (Original) The method of Claim 10 additionally comprising exposing the  
2     flask to water vapor.

1                   17.     (Original) The method of Claim 10 wherein said flask comprises a  
2     transparent structure.

1                   18.     (Original) The method of Claim 17 additionally comprising viewing the  
2     substance through the transparent structure.

19-22. Canceled.

1                   23.     (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2     comprising a flask having a structure defining a first opening; a first filter member disposed in  
3     the first opening; a second filter member disposed in the first opening and having the capability  
4     of being contacted by the first filter when the first filter is flexed, a second opening, and The  
5     ~~device of Claim 19 additionally comprising~~ a third filter member disposed in a second opening.

1                   24.     (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2     comprising a flask having a structure defining an opening; a first filter member disposed in the  
3     opening; a second filter member disposed in the opening and having the capability of being  
4     contacted by the first filter when the first filter is flexed, and ~~The device of Claim 19 additionally~~  
5     ~~comprising~~ a temperature-conductive member passing through a side of the flask.

25-26. Canceled.

1                   27.     (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2     comprising a flask having a structure defining an opening; a first filter member disposed in the  
3     opening; a second filter member disposed in the opening and having the capability of being  
4     contacted by the first filter when the first filter is flexed, and ~~The device of Claim 19 additionally~~  
5     ~~comprising~~ a pair of temperature-conductive members passing through the flask.

28. Canceled.

1                   29.     (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2     comprising a flask having a structure defining an opening; a first filter member disposed in the  
3     opening; a second filter member disposed in the opening and having the capability of being  
4     contacted by the first filter when the first filter is flexed, a retainer ring engaged to the flask for  
5     retaining the first and second filter members in the opening wherein said retainer ring includes an  
6     inwardly protruding lip extending over a portion of the second filter member disposed between  
7     the inwardly protruding lip and the flask and, ~~The device of Claim 28 additionally comprising a~~  
8     cap coupled to the retainer ring.

30-33. Canceled.

1                   34.     (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2     comprising a flask having a structure defining a first opening; a first filter member disposed over  
3     the first opening and having a flexed structure; a second filter member disposed over the first

4 opening and in contact with the flexed structure, a second opening and ~~The device of Claim 6~~  
5 ~~additionally comprising~~ a third filter member disposed in said second opening.

35-39. Canceled.

1 40. (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2 comprising a flask having a structure defining an opening; a first filter member disposed in the  
3 opening; a second filter member disposed in the opening and having no absorbing material  
4 positioned between the first and second filter members, and ~~The device of Claim 37 additionally~~  
5 ~~comprising~~ at least one temperature-conductive member passing through the ~~flask~~ flask.

1 41. (Currently amended) A device for holding substances during drying  
2 comprising a flask having a structure defining an opening; a first filter member disposed in the  
3 opening; a second filter member disposed in the opening wherein said first and second filter  
4 members are juxtaposed with respect to each other and have no absorbing material positioned  
5 between the first and second filter members, and ~~The device of Claim 39 additionally~~  
6 ~~comprising~~ at least one temperature-conductive member passing through the flask.

42-43. Canceled.

1 44. (Previously presented) The freeze-drying assembly of Claim 9 wherein  
2 said first filter member has a higher flexibility than the second filter member.

1 45. (Previously presented) The freeze-drying assembly of Claim 9 wherein  
2 said structure of said flask additionally comprises a second opening.

1 46. (Previously presented) The freeze-drying assembly of Claim 45  
2 additionally comprising a third filter member disposed in said second opening.

1 47. (Previously presented) The freeze-drying assembly of Claim 9  
2 additionally comprising a temperature-conductive member passing through a side of the flask.

1                   48.     (Previously presented) The freeze-drying assembly of Claim 46  
2     additionally comprising a temperature-conductive member passing through a side of the flask.

1                   49.     (Previously presented) The freeze-drying assembly of Claim 9 wherein  
2     said first filter member includes a flexed structure in contact with the second filter member.

1                   50.     (Previously presented) The freeze-drying assembly of Claim 9 wherein  
2     said first filter member and said second filter member have no absorbing material disposed  
3     between them.

1                   51.     (Previously presented) A method for processing a substance under sterile  
2     conditions comprising disposing a substance in a flask; positioning the flask in a drying  
3     apparatus; passing a drying medium through a first filter member and through a second filter  
4     member for drying the substance; and moving the second filter towards the first filter member.

1                   52.     (Previously presented) The method of Claim 51 additionally comprising  
2     re-hydrating the dried substance.

1                   53.     (Previously presented) The method of Claim 51 additionally comprising  
2     moving the second filter member against the first filter member.

1                   54.     (Previously presented) The method of Claim 51 wherein said second filter  
2     member is juxtaposed to the first filter member.

1                   55.     (Previously presented) The method of Claim 51 wherein said first filter  
2     member and said second filter member have no absorbing material disposed between them.

1                   56.     (Currently amended) A method for processing a substance under sterile  
2     conditions comprising disposing a substance in a flask; positioning the flask in a drying  
3     apparatus; and passing a drying medium through a first filter member and through a second filter  
4     member juxtaposed to the first filter member for drying the substance ~~The method of Claim 10~~

5 wherein said first filter member and said second filter member have no absorbing material  
6 disposed between them.

1                   57.     (Previously presented) A device for holding substances during drying  
2 comprising a flask having a structure defining an opening; a first filter member disposed in the  
3 opening; a second filter member disposed in the opening; and a temperature-conductive member  
4 passing through a side of the flask.

1                   58.     (Previously presented) The device of Claim 57 wherein said structure  
2 defines a second opening.

1                   59.     (Previously presented) The device of Claim 58 additionally comprising a  
2 third filter member disposed in said second opening.

1                   60.     (Previously presented) The device of Claim 57 wherein said second filter  
2 possesses the capability of being contacted by the first filter when the first filter is flexed.

1                   61.     (Previously presented) The device of Claim 59 wherein said second filter  
2 possesses the capability of being contacted by the first filter when the first filter is flexed